

Carmichael Book Dominates NCPA Book Awards



Author Susan Maxwell Skinner (center) received three top publishing prizes for a book on Carmichael. NCPA president Barry Schoenborn (right) and member Ken Umbach presented the awards.

A coffee table book about Carmichael was last month judged winner of three professional California publishing awards.

Written and photographed in 17 square miles of the 100-year-old Sacramento satellite, *Carmichael – Americana on the Move* last month dominated an awards event hosted by Northern California Publishers and Authors. The book also took bronze prize for third best book produced in 2007. A photo-essay containing over 300 color pictures of contemporary Carmichael, the edition got Best Photography, Best Photo Layout and Best (soft) Cover awards.

Author Susan Maxwell Skinner wrote, photographed and published the 104-page book in her adopted Carmichael. President of the publishers' organization, Barry Schoenborn, called the 2006 edition "worthy of the attention of readers everywhere."

Previous reviews also yielded surprising kudos. Sacramento Magazine hailed the book as "*A world class photojournalist's intimate look at a place unknown to most of the world.*" At the Sacramento Bee, Anita Creamer enthused: "*(Susan's) Carmichael is a Norman Rockwellish place...one day, grandkids and great grandkids of current residents can see what once was.*" Carmichael library branch supervisor Jill Stockinger predicted: "*The book will have more importance with each passing year.*"

At the NCPA event, board member Ken Umbach considered the project "a remarkable and possibly unique accomplishment, (belonging) in every Carmichael home and in the hands of everyone who wants to experience small town America as seen through the eyes and heart of a talented photojournalist." Skinner, said Umbach, "captured not only what we see in a home town but also what we want to remember."

New Zealand-born Skinner told the publishers' group her opus was "the project of a lifetime and a love-letter to America." The author recognized that some locals considered her energy for the one-year-plus project to be quixotic. "I never lost conviction that my book needed to be done before huge chunks of Carmichael history and Americana vanished," she said. "Through my pictures, I hoped people would recognize that small towns -- and their traditions and values -- are among this nation's most undervalued treasures."

For information on Carmichael – Americana on the Move, call (916) 481- 0334. Beverly's Craft Store, Carmichael, also stocks the book. The author gives an amusing, educational presentation and exhibits photography from the book. To enquire about this exhibit and talk for your group, call 481-0334.